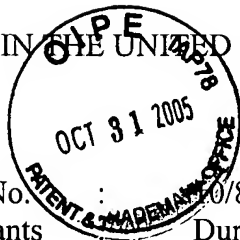


IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



Appl. No. : 10/816,749
Applicants : Durrant, et al.
Filed : April 2, 2004
TC/A.U. : 2876
Examiner : Hess, Daniel A.

Confirmation No. 1146

Docket No. : 403FO001
Customer No. : not applicable

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

APPEAL BRIEF

Sir:

This is an appeal of the Final Rejection dated September 8, 2005, of Claims 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19. The Notice of Appeal is timely filed herewith.

I. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest in this appeal is Stratos International, Inc., having an address at 7444 West Wilson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60706.

II. RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

Appellants, Appellants' legal representative and the assignee are aware of no appeals or interferences which are believed to directly affect, be directly affected by, or have a bearing on the Board's decision in this appeal.

III. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 are pending. Claims 1-10, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20-29 have been canceled. Claims 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 stand finally rejected and are under consideration in the present appeal.

IV. STATUS OF THE AMENDMENTS

No amendment under 37 CFR §1.116 has been filed.

V. SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Appellants' invention is directed to a device (see Figures 6-12) which enables a reader (antenna 93 and transceiver 102) to communicate with a transponder 70 so as to transfer information concerning the fiber optic connector 10 to which the transponder 70 is attached. Experience has shown that a fiber optic connector or cable can be inadvertently detached from a host device, or that the optical fiber within the fiber optic cable breaks and the fiber optic cable can no longer transmit light energy to or from the host device. In such instances, a worker must go and look at the panel of the host device and determine which cable is no longer transmitting light signals to or from the host device either because the optical fiber is broken or the fiber optic cable and associated connector is detached from the host device. When two or more fiber optic

cables are malfunctioning, the worker's job becomes very burdensome and time consuming since there are, potentially, hundreds of fiber optic cables to examine. Furthermore, a device or person is not receiving information conveyed by the malfunctioning fiber optic cable. Thus, organization of the fiber optic cables and their fiber optic connectors in the vicinity of the panel is of great interest to the operators of the host devices (paragraph [0006] of the specification).

Briefly, Appellants' invention is directed to a device which enables specific fiber optic connectors 10 to be identified with their respective mating locations on a substrate 90 on a patch panel 80, and to be able to transfer information from the fiber optic connector 10 to the substrate 90 on the patch panel 80 (paragraphs [0010] and [0012] of the specification). Such a solution reduces the amount of time necessary to perform and rectify fiber optic cable management issues.

In order to solve the above-identified problem, Appellants have invented a device which enables a reader (antenna 93 and transceiver 102) which is mountable to a panel 80 of a host device 110 to communicate with a transponder 70 mounted to a fiber optic connector 10 (paragraph [0035] of the specification). Examples of information which can be stored in the transponder 70 include the following information: the length of the fiber optic cable to which the transponder is attached; the date of purchase of the fiber optic cable to which the transponder is attached; the type or style of fiber optic connector to which the transponder is attached; the type of warranty associated with the fiber optic cable to which the transponder is attached; and/or the type, style, or grade of optic fiber housed within the fiber optic cable to which the transponder is attached (paragraph [0037] of the specification).

Thus, if the fiber optic cable 30 goes dark because the optical fiber housed within the fiber optic cable 30 is broken, then the host device 110, through the transceiver 102, can pinpoint

the location of the malfunctioning fiber optic cable 30 via the transponder 70 placed on the fiber optic connector 10. The malfunctioning fiber optic cable 30 can then be repaired or replaced. Additionally, the device provides a system operator with the ability to monitor the number and location of the fiber optic connectors 10 attached to the host device 110 (paragraph [0038] of the specification). Furthermore, the operator, through the host device 110, can extract important information, as described in the above paragraph, from the transponder 70 mounted on the fiber optic connector 10 of the fiber optic cable 30. For example, the operator does not need to look-up paper documents in a file to find the warranty information, such information is stored on the transponder 70 of the fiber optic connector 10.

The invention, as recited in Claim 11, is a device shown in non-limiting Figures 6-12. The device includes a fiber optic cable 30, a transponder 70, a substrate 90, an antenna 93, and a transceiver 102. The fiber optic cable 30 includes a fiber optic connector 10. The transponder 70 is attached to the fiber optic connector 10. The substrate 90 is adapted for attachment to a panel 80 of a host device 110. The antenna 93 is attached to the substrate 90. The transceiver 102 is electrically connected to the antenna 93 so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder 70 when the transponder 70 is sufficiently close to the antenna 93. The fiber optic cable 30 has a length. The transponder 70 includes information related to the length of the fiber optic cable 30.

The invention, as recited in Claim 13, is a device shown in non-limiting Figures 6-12. The device includes a fiber optic cable 30, a transponder 70, a substrate 90, an antenna 93, and a transceiver 102. The fiber optic cable 30 includes a fiber optic connector 10. The transponder 70 is attached to the fiber optic connector 10. The substrate 90 is adapted for attachment to a panel 80 of a host device 110. The antenna 93 is attached to the substrate 90. The transceiver

102 is electrically connected to the antenna 93 so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder 70 when the transponder 70 is sufficiently close to the antenna 93. The fiber optic connector 10 conforms to an industrial standard. The transponder 70 includes information related to the industrial standard to which the fiber optic connector 10 conforms.

The invention, as recited in Claim 15, is a device shown in non-limiting Figures 6-12. The device includes a fiber optic cable 30, a transponder 70, a substrate 90, an antenna 93, and a transceiver 102. The fiber optic cable 30 includes a fiber optic connector 10. The transponder 70 is attached to the fiber optic connector 10. The substrate 90 is adapted for attachment to a panel 80 of a host device 110. The antenna 93 is attached to the substrate 90. The transceiver 102 is electrically connected to the antenna 93 so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder 70 when the transponder 70 is sufficiently close to the antenna 93. The fiber optic cable 30 includes an optical fiber, and the optical fiber conforms to a predetermined optical fiber grade. The transponder 70 includes information related to the predetermined optical fiber grade of the optical fiber of the fiber optic cable 30.

The invention, as recited in Claim 17, is a device shown in non-limiting Figures 6-12. The device includes a fiber optic cable 30, a transponder 70, a substrate 90, an antenna 93, and a transceiver 102. The fiber optic cable 30 includes a fiber optic connector 10. The transponder 70 is attached to the fiber optic connector 10. The substrate 90 is adapted for attachment to a panel 80 of a host device 110. The antenna 93 is attached to the substrate 90. The transceiver 102 is electrically connected to the antenna 93 so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder 70 when the transponder 70 is sufficiently close to

the antenna 93. The fiber optic cable 30 was purchased on a specified date. The transponder 70 includes information related to the specific purchase date of the fiber optic cable 30.

The invention, as recited in Claim 19, is a device shown in non-limiting Figures 6-12. The device includes a fiber optic cable 30, a transponder 70, a substrate 90, an antenna 93, and a transceiver 102. The fiber optic cable 30 includes a fiber optic connector 10. The transponder 70 is attached to the fiber optic connector 10. The substrate 90 is adapted for attachment to a panel 80 of a host device 110. The antenna 93 is attached to the substrate 90. The transceiver 102 is electrically connected to the antenna 93 so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder 70 when the transponder 70 is sufficiently close to the antenna 93. The fiber optic cable 30 was purchased pursuant to a warranty. The transponder 70 includes information related to the warranty.

VI. ISSUES

The issue to be considered on appeal is whether Claims 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 are unpatentable over Stanescu (U.S. Patent No. 6,784,802) in view of Renzoni (U.S. Patent No. 6,745,971).

VII. GROUPING OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 do not stand or fall together. Claims 11, 13, and 17 are grouped together. Claim 15 is grouped separately from Claim 19, and Claims 11, 13, and 17 for the reasons set forth in the arguments below. Claim 19 is grouped separately from Claim 15, and Claims 11, 13, and 17 for the reasons set forth in the arguments below.

VIII. ARGUMENT

The final rejection rejects Claims 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stanescu (U.S. Patent No. 6,784,802) in view of Renzoni (U.S. Patent No. 6,745,971).

A. Discussion of rejection of Claim 11

Claim 11, as discussed above, was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stanescu in view of Renzoni.

The final rejection argues that Stanescu discloses every feature of Appellants' invention as recited in Claim 11 except for "fiber length." The Stanescu reference fails to disclose the length of an optical fiber, and the inclusion of that information in a transponder. Thus, the Stanescu reference lacks the claimed features of "the fiber optic cable has a length," and wherein "the transponder includes information related to the length of the optical cable," as recited in Claim 11. Therefore, the Stanescu reference is not believed to in any way anticipate or render obvious the present invention as recited in Claim 11.

Renzoni discloses a spooling device for an optical fiber jump cable. The spooling device includes an optical fiber having respective connectors at each end of the optical fiber. The final rejection argues that Renzoni "teaches (column 4, lines 40-45) labeling information on a fiber spool including connector type (same information as claim 13), fiber length (same information as claim 11) and purchase date (same information as claim 17)." In stark contrast to Appellants' claimed invention, the Renzoni reference fails to disclose a transponder, a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device, an antenna, a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna, and the transponder having information related to the length of the fiber optic cable. Thus, the Renzoni reference lacks the claimed features of "a transponder attached to the fiber

optic connector,” and “a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device,” and “an antenna attached to the substrate,” and “a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder when the transponder is sufficiently close to the antenna,” and wherein “the transponder includes information related to the length of the fiber optic cable,” as recited in Claim 11. Therefore, the Renzoni reference is not believed to in any way anticipate or render obvious the present invention as recited in Claim 11.

The final rejection cited Renzoni in combination with Stanescu for rendering obvious the claimed invention. However, the Renzoni reference provides no teaching to overcome the shortcomings of Stanescu in regard to Claim 11. Thus, Claim 11 is believed to be clearly allowable over these references.

However, the final rejection takes the position set forth below:

In view of Rezoni’s information, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the old and well-known connector type information (claim 13), fiber length (claim 11) and purchase date (claim 17) in the transponder tag and communication system of Stanescu because as Rezoni clearly recognizes, these are all relevant data in putting together a good fiber network. Connectors must match, fiber length must be compensated for by necessary amplification, and purchase date indicates how old the fiber is.

The final rejection asserts that “Renzoni clearly recognizes, these are all relevant data;” however, the Renzoni reference fails to provide the teaching or motivation to impart with the transponder

the information related to the length of the fiber optical cable. The final rejection does not set forth or cite the source for the motivation to combine references as set forth in MPEP sections 2142, and 2143. Therefore, Appellants believe that the rejection of Claim 11 should be removed, and that Claim 11 should be allowed.

B. Discussion of rejection of Claim 13

Claim 13, as discussed above, was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stanescu in view of Renzoni.

The final rejection argues that Stanescu discloses every feature of Appellants' invention as recited in Claim 13 except for "connector type." The Stanescu reference fails to disclose the industrial standard to which the fiber optic connector conforms, and the inclusion of that information in a transponder. Thus, the Stanescu reference lacks the claimed features of "the fiber optic connector conforms to an industrial standard," and wherein "the transponder includes information related to the industrial standard to which the fiber optic connector conforms," as recited in Claim 13. Therefore, the Stanescu reference is not believed to in any way anticipate or render obvious the present invention as recited in Claim 13.

Renzoni discloses a spooling device for an optical fiber jump cable. The spooling device includes an optical fiber having respective connectors at each end of the optical fiber. The final rejection argues that Renzoni "teaches (column 4, lines 40-45) labeling information on a fiber spool including connector type (same information as claim 13), fiber length (same information as claim 11) and purchase date (same information as claim 17)." In stark contrast to Appellants' claimed invention, the Renzoni reference fails to disclose a transponder, a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device, an antenna, a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna, and the transponder having information related to the industrial standard to which the

fiber optic connector conforms. Thus, the Renzoni reference lacks the claimed features of “a transponder attached to the fiber optic connector,” and “a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device,” and “an antenna attached to the substrate,” and “a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder when the transponder is sufficiently close to the antenna,” and wherein “the transponder includes information related to the industrial standard to which the fiber optic connector conforms,” as recited in Claim 13. Therefore, the Renzoni reference is not believed to in any way anticipate or render obvious the present invention as recited in Claim 13.

The final rejection cited Renzoni in combination with Stanescu for rendering obvious the claimed invention. However, the Renzoni reference provides no teaching to overcome the shortcomings of Stanescu in regard to Claim 13. Thus, Claim 13 is believed to be clearly allowable over these references.

However, the final rejection takes the position set forth below:

In view of Rezoni's information, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the old and well-known connector type information (claim 13), fiber length (claim 11) and purchase date (claim 17) in the transponder tag and communication system of Stanescu because as Rezoni clearly recognizes, these are all relevant data in putting together a good fiber network. Connectors must match, fiber length must be compensated for by necessary amplification, and purchase date indicates how old the fiber is.

The final rejection asserts that “Renzoni clearly recognizes, these are all relevant data;” however, the Renzoni reference fails to provide the teaching or motivation to impart with the transponder the information related to the industrial standard to which the fiber optic connector conforms. The final rejection does not set forth or cite the source for the motivation to combine references as set forth in MPEP sections 2142, and 2143. Therefore, Appellants believe that the rejection of Claim 13 should be removed, and that Claim 13 should be allowed.

C. Discussion of rejection of Claim 15

Claim 15, as discussed above, was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stanescu in view of Renzoni.

Claim 15 is separately patentable from Claim 19, and Claims 11, 13, and 17, since the applied prior art, as applied and argued in regard to Claim 15, neither discloses nor suggests the device of Claim 15.

The final rejection argues that Stanescu discloses every feature of Appellants’ invention as recited in Claim 15 except for “grade.” The Stanescu reference fails to disclose the grade of the optical fiber, and the inclusion of that information in a transponder. Thus, the Stanescu reference lacks the claimed features of “the fiber optic cable includes an optical fiber, and wherein the optical fiber conforms to a predetermined optical fiber grade,” and wherein “the transponder includes information related to the predetermined optical fiber grade of the optical fiber of the fiber optic cable,” as recited in Claim 15. Therefore, the Stanescu reference is not believed to in any way anticipate or render obvious the present invention as recited in Claim 15.

Renzoni discloses a spooling device for an optical fiber jump cable. The spooling device includes an optical fiber having respective connectors at each end of the optical fiber. The final rejection argues that Renzoni “teaches (column 4, lines 40-45) labeling information on a fiber

spool including connector type (same information as claim 13), fiber length (same information as claim 11) and purchase date (same information as claim 17).” In stark contrast to Appellants’ claimed invention, the Renzone reference fails to disclose a transponder, a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device, an antenna, a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna, and the transponder having information related to the predetermined optical fiber grade of the optical fiber. Thus, the Renzone reference lacks the claimed features of “a transponder attached to the fiber optic connector,” and “a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device,” and “an antenna attached to the substrate,” and “a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder when the transponder is sufficiently close to the antenna,” and wherein “the transponder includes information related to the predetermined optical fiber grade of the optical fiber of the fiber optic cable,” as recited in Claim 15. Therefore, the Renzone reference is not believed to in any way anticipate or render obvious the present invention as recited in Claim 15.

The final rejection cited Renzone in combination with Stanescu for rendering obvious the claimed invention. However, the Renzone reference provides no teaching to overcome the shortcomings of Stanescu in regard to Claim 15. Thus, Claim 15 is believed to be clearly allowable over these references.

The final rejection argues that “Stoy (US 5,066,091) makes mention (column 14, lines 62-68) of the value of grade matching in replacing fibers in a system.” In stark contrast to Appellants’ claimed invention, the Stoy reference does not disclose a transponder having information related to the predetermined optical fiber grade of the optical fiber. Thus, the Stoy reference lacks the claimed features of “a transponder attached to the fiber optic connector,” and “the transponder includes information related to the predetermined optical fiber grade of the

optical fiber of the fiber optic cable,” as recited in Claim 15. Therefore, the Stoy reference is not believed to in any way anticipate or render obvious the present invention as recited in Claim 15.

The final rejection cited Stoy in combination with Stanescu in view of Renzoni for rendering obvious the claimed invention. However, the Stoy reference provides no teaching to overcome the shortcomings of Stanescu in view of Renzoni in regard to Claim 15. Thus, Claim 15 is believed to be clearly allowable over these references.

Additionally, in regard to the rejection of Claim 15, the final rejection fails to provide the teaching or motivation to impart with the transponder the information related to the predetermined optical fiber grade of the optical fiber of the fiber optic cable. The final rejection does not set forth or cite the source for the motivation to combine references as set forth in MPEP sections 2142, and 2143. Therefore, Appellants believe that the rejection of Claim 15 should be removed, and that Claim 15 should be allowed.

D. Discussion of rejection of Claim 17

Claim 17, as discussed above, was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stanescu in view of Renzoni.

The final rejection argues that Stanescu discloses every feature of Appellants’ invention as recited in Claim 17 except for “purchase date.” The Stanescu reference fails to disclose the specified date on which the fiber optic cable was purchased, and the inclusion of that information in a transponder. Thus, the Stanescu reference lacks the claimed features of “the fiber optic cable was purchased on a specified date,” and wherein “the transponder includes information related to the specific purchase date of the fiber optic cable,” as recited in Claim 17. Therefore, the Stanescu reference is not believed to in any way anticipate or render obvious the present invention as recited in Claim 17.

Renzoni discloses a spooling device for an optical fiber jump cable. The spooling device includes an optical fiber having respective connectors at each end of the optical fiber. The final rejection argues that Renzoni “teaches (column 4, lines 40-45) labeling information on a fiber spool including connector type (same information as claim 13), fiber length (same information as claim 11) and purchase date (same information as claim 17).” In stark contrast to Appellants’ claimed invention, the Renzoni reference fails to disclose a transponder, a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device, an antenna, a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna, and the transponder having information related to the specific purchase date of the fiber optic cable. Thus, the Renzoni reference lacks the claimed features of “a transponder attached to the fiber optic connector,” and “a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device,” and “an antenna attached to the substrate,” and “a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder when the transponder is sufficiently close to the antenna,” and wherein “the transponder includes information related to the specific purchase date of the fiber optic cable,” as recited in Claim 17. Therefore, the Renzoni reference is not believed to in any way anticipate or render obvious the present invention as recited in Claim 17.

The final rejection cited Renzoni in combination with Stanescu for rendering obvious the claimed invention. However, the Renzoni reference provides no teaching to overcome the shortcomings of Stanescu in regard to Claim 17. Thus, Claim 17 is believed to be clearly allowable over these references.

However, the final rejection takes the position set forth below:

In view of Renzoni’s information, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to

include the old and well-known connector type information (claim 13), fiber length (claim 11) and purchase date (claim 17) in the transponder tag and communication system of Stanescu because as Renzoni clearly recognizes, these are all relevant data in putting together a good fiber network. Connectors must match, fiber length must be compensated for by necessary amplification, and purchase date indicates how old the fiber is.

The final rejection asserts that “Renzoni clearly recognizes, these are all relevant data;” however, the Renzoni reference fails to provide the teaching or motivation to impart with the transponder the information related to the specific purchase date of the fiber optic cable. The final rejection does not set forth or cite the source for the motivation to combine references as set forth in MPEP sections 2142, and 2143. Therefore, Appellants believe that the rejection of Claim 17 should be removed, and that Claim 17 should be allowed.

E. Discussion of rejection of Claim 19

Claim 19, as discussed above, was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stanescu in view of Renzoni.

Claim 19 is separately patentable from Claim 15, and Claims 11, 13, and 17, since the applied prior art, as applied and argued in regard to Claim 19, neither discloses nor suggests the device of Claim 19.

The final rejection argues that Stanescu discloses every feature of Appellants’ invention as recited in Claim 19 except for “warranty.” The Stanescu reference fails to disclose the warranty associated with the fiber optic cable, and the inclusion of that information in a transponder. Thus, the Stanescu reference lacks the claimed features of “the fiber optic cable

was purchased pursuant to a warranty,” and wherein “transponder includes information related to the warranty,” as recited in Claim 19. Therefore, the Stanescu reference is not believed to in any way anticipate or render obvious the present invention as recited in Claim 19.

Renzoni discloses a spooling device for an optical fiber jump cable. The spooling device includes an optical fiber having respective connectors at each end of the optical fiber. The final rejection argues that Renzoni “teaches (column 4, lines 40-45) labeling information on a fiber spool including connector type (same information as claim 13), fiber length (same information as claim 11) and purchase date (same information as claim 17).” In stark contrast to Appellants’ claimed invention, the Renzoni reference fails to disclose a transponder, a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device, an antenna, a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna, and the transponder having information related to the warranty of the fiber optic cable. Thus, the Renzoni reference lacks the claimed features of “a transponder attached to the fiber optic connector,” and “a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device,” and “an antenna attached to the substrate,” and “a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder when the transponder is sufficiently close to the antenna,” and wherein “the fiber optic cable was purchased pursuant to a warranty,” and wherein “the transponder includes information related to the warranty,” as recited in Claim 19. Therefore, the Renzoni reference is not believed to in any way anticipate or render obvious the present invention as recited in Claim 19.

The final rejection cited Renzoni in combination with Stanescu for rendering obvious the claimed invention. However, the Renzoni reference provides no teaching to overcome the shortcomings of Stanescu in regard to Claim 19. Thus, Claim 19 is believed to be clearly allowable over these references.

However, the final rejection takes the position set forth below:

Warranty information is also understood in the art to be useful
when maintaining a fiber optic network because if a fiber in the
network is under warranty, it might be possible to recoup its costs.

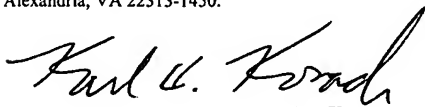
The final rejection does not set forth or cite the source for the motivation to combine references as set forth in MPEP sections 2142, and 2143. Also, the final rejection does not cite a reference for the claim feature of a “warranty,” as set forth in MPEP section 2143.03. Therefore, Appellants believe that the rejection of Claim 19 should be removed, and that Claim 19 should be allowed.


IX. CONCLUSION

For the reasons discussed herein, Appellants submit that the Final Rejection is improper and should be reversed.

Respectfully submitted,

I hereby certify that this paper and/or fee is being deposited
with the United States Postal Service First-Class mail on this 28th
day of October, 2005 and is addressed to:
Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.



By 
Karl D. Kovach
Reg. No. 40,278
Stratos International, Inc.
Attorney for Applicants
7444 West Wilson Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60706
(708) 867-9600

APPENDIX I

CLAIMS ON APPEAL

11. A device comprising:

a fiber optic cable having a fiber optic connector;

a transponder attached to the fiber optic connector;

a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device;

an antenna attached to the substrate; and

a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder when the transponder is sufficiently close to the antenna, and wherein

the fiber optic cable has a length, and wherein

the transponder includes information related to the length of the fiber optic cable.

13. A device comprising:

a fiber optic cable having a fiber optic connector;

a transponder attached to the fiber optic connector;

a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device;

an antenna attached to the substrate; and

a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder when the transponder is sufficiently close to the antenna, and wherein

the fiber optic connector conforms to an industrial standard, and wherein

the transponder includes information related to the industrial standard to which the fiber optic connector conforms.

15. A device comprising:

a fiber optic cable having a fiber optic connector;

a transponder attached to the fiber optic connector;

a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device;

an antenna attached to the substrate; and

a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder when the transponder is sufficiently close to the antenna, and wherein

the fiber optic cable includes an optical fiber, and wherein the optical fiber conforms to a predetermined optical fiber grade, and wherein

the transponder includes information related to the predetermined optical fiber grade of the optical fiber of the fiber optic cable.

17. A device comprising:

a fiber optic cable having a fiber optic connector;

a transponder attached to the fiber optic connector;

a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device;

an antenna attached to the substrate; and

a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder when the transponder is sufficiently close to the antenna, and wherein

the fiber optic cable was purchased on a specified date, and wherein

the transponder includes information related to the specific purchase date of the fiber optic cable.

19. A device comprising:

a fiber optic cable having a fiber optic connector;

a transponder attached to the fiber optic connector;

a substrate adapted for attachment to a panel of a host device;

an antenna attached to the substrate; and

a transceiver electrically connected to the antenna so as to form a reader which is capable of activating and interrogating the transponder when the transponder is sufficiently close to the antenna, and wherein

the fiber optic cable was purchased pursuant to a warranty, and wherein

the transponder includes information related to the warranty.